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**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 2 and 23-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Chen. The Examiner states on page 2 of the Office Action that the inside of the sockets 331 and 341 of Chen include a pair of opposed inclined edges that define an opening for the sockets, and therefore Applicant's claims 1, 2 and 23-25 are anticipated.

Applicant's claims are not anticipated by Chen. The sockets of Chen do not include opposed inclined edges that define openings as claimed by Applicant. As defined in the attached exhibits, an edge is defined as "the line where an object or area begins or ends." Incline is defined as "to deviate from the vertical or horizontal." In Figure 4 of Chen, the opposed edges of the socket component are the outermost regions of the socket. The portion of the edges that define the opening from the socket are shown as the leftmost and rightmost portion of the sockets. However, this portion does not "deviate from the vertical or horizontal," but is rather vertical. Applicant's claims are not anticipated, and Applicant requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 22 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Herbermann. Herbermann does not disclose a method for supporting an object including the step of providing a component including a pair of sockets. In Herbermann, the support system 20 includes ball jointed links 26 each including a female socket 30 at one end and a male ball 32 at an opposing end. Each link only includes only one socket 30. Applicant is claiming the step of providing a socket component including a pair of sockets. Herbermann only discloses providing one socket, and Applicant's claim 22 is not anticipated by Herbermann.

The Examiner further rejected claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Chen. The Examiner contends that it is an obvious matter to change the size and the diameter of the balls and arms, but supplies no evidence. Applicant cannot respond without the evidence, and asks that the hold be dropped or evidence supplied. There is no suggestion in Chen to include balls and arms having the diameter as claimed, and certainly not the relative sizes. Additionally, claim 3 depends on patentable independent claim 1 and is therefore patentable for the reasons explained above. Thus, the Office Action fails to establish a prima facie case of obviousness with respect to claim 3, and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. Claim 3 is not obvious in view of Chen.

The Examiner rejected claims 4-12 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over

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Chen in view of Herbermann. The Examiner states that Herbermann teaches balls of a material harder than a socket, sockets of aluminum, sockets that cover more than one half of a surface area of balls, a socket component that includes a first socket half and a second socket half secured together to form a pair of sockets, that the edges of the sockets are inclined approximately 75° from a lower edge of the assembly, and that the balls are serrated. Claims 4-12 and 26 depend on patentable independent claim 1 and is therefore patentable for the reasons explained above. Additionally, neither reference discloses or suggests that the pair of inclined edges are inclined approximately 75° from a lower edge of the assembly as claimed in claim 11. Therefore, the combination of Chen and Herbermann do not disclose or suggest Claim 11. Thus, the Office Action fails to establish a prima facie case of obviousness with respect to claims 4-12 and 26, and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 13-21 and 27-30 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Herbermann in view of Chen. The Examiner contends it would be obvious to modify the support system 20 of Herbermann to include two socket halves because of Chen, and therefore Applicant's claims are obvious.

It is not obvious to provides the links 26 of Herbermann with two socket halves because of Chen. In Herbermann, the links include a female socket 30 at one end and a male ball 32 at the opposing end. A ball 32 of one link 26 is secured in the socket 30 of another link 26 by a clamp 28. In Chen, a first clamp half and a second clamp half form a socket that receives the balls. The clamp 28 secures the ball 32 in the link 26, and therefore there is no reason or benefit to form the links 26 of two halves to enclose the ball 32 in a socket suggested by Chen.

Additionally, there is no reason or motivation to form the links 26 of Herbermann of a first socket half and a second socket half. In Chen, the sockets 331 cover more than half of the surface area of each ball 41. When the socket halves are secured together by bolts 333, the ball 41 is secured in the socket 331. Even if the socket 30 of Herbermann was formed of two halves, the socket 30 would not be large enough to retain the ball 32. Therefore, a clamp 28 must be employed to secure ball 32 in the socket 30. It would not be possible to employ this arrangement in Herbermann because the sockets 30 are not large enough to retain the ball 41.

Additionally, a main feature of Herbermann is to provide a link 28 having a socket 30 and a ball 32. Applicant is claiming a socket component includes a pair of sockets. If Herbermann

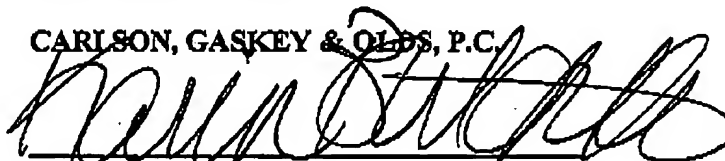
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included a socket component with a pair of sockets, this feature would be ruined as there would be no ball component. Applicant's claims are not obvious, and Applicant requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Thus, claims 1-30 are in condition for allowance. No additional fees are seen to be required. If any additional fees are due, however, the Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-1482, in the name of Carlson, Gaskey & Olds, P.C., for any additional fees or credit the account for any overpayment. Therefore, favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

CARLSON, GASKEY & OLDS, P.C.



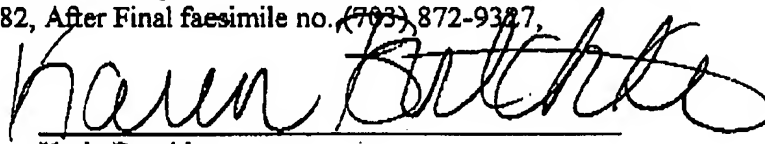
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Dated: September 30, 2003

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edge[1,noun]   
edge[2,verb]  
cutting edge  
deckle edge  
edge city  
edge effect

Main Entry: <sup>1</sup>edge **n**

Pronunciation: 'eɪ

Function: *noun*

Etymology: Middle English *egge*, from Old English *ecg*; akin to Latin *acer* sharp, Greek *akmē* point

Date: before 12th century

**1** *a* : the cutting side of a blade *b* : the sharpness of a blade *c* (1) : **FORCE, EFFECTIVENESS** <blunted the *edge* of the legislation> (2) : vigor or energy especially of body <maintains his hard *edge*> *d* (1) : incisive or penetrating quality <writing with a satirical *edge*> (2) : a noticeably harsh or sharp quality <her voice had an *edge* to it> *e* : keenness of desire or enjoyment <lost my competitive *edge*> <took the *edge* off our appetites>

**2** *a* : the line where an object or area begins or ends : **BORDER** <on the *edge* of a plain> *b* : the narrow part adjacent to a border <the *edge* of the deck> *c* : a point near the beginning or the end; especially : **BRINK, VERGE** <on the *edge* of disaster> *d* : a favorable margin : **ADVANTAGE** <has an *edge* on the competition>

**3** : a line or line segment that is the intersection of two plane faces (as of a pyramid) or of two planes

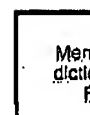
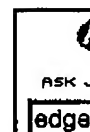
- *edge-less adjective*

- *on edge* : **ANXIOUS, NERVOUS**

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Incline[1,verb]  
incline[2,noun]

Main Entry: **in·cline** *in·*

Pronunciation: in- 'kline

Function: *verb*

Inflected Form(s): *in·clined; in·clin·ing*

Etymology: Middle English, from Middle French *incliner*, from Latin *inclinare*, from *in-* + *clinare* to lean -- more at **LEAN**

Date: 14th century

*intransitive senses*

1 : to bend the head or body forward : **BOW**

2 : to lean, tend, or become drawn toward an opinion or course of conduct

3 : to deviate from a line, direction, or course; *specifically* : to deviate from the vertical or horizontal

*transitive senses*

1 : to cause to stoop or bow : **BEND**

2 : to have influence on : **PERSUADE** <his love of books *inclined* him toward a literary career>

3 : to give a bend or slant to

- *in·clin·er* *noun*

**synonyms** **INCLINE**, **BIAS**, **DISPOSE**, **PREDISPOSE** mean to influence one to have or take an attitude toward something. **INCLINE** implies a tendency to favor one of two or more actions or conclusions <I *incline* to agree>. **BIAS** suggests a settled and predictable leaning in one direction and connotes unfair prejudice <the experience *biased* him against foreigners>. **DISPOSE** suggests an affecting of one's mood or temper so as to incline one toward something <her nature *disposes* her to trust others>. **PREDISPOSE** implies the operation of a disposing influence well in advance of the opportunity to manifest itself <does fictional violence *predispose* them to accept real violence?>.

